

Bob Monroe Research Laboratory
(Excerpted from an article written by Leslie France)

What we call our laboratory had its beginning back in 1959, in a Quonset secretly constructed on an estate in Westchester County, New York. Bob agrees with the secrecy part, because he didn't bother to get a building permit. He does not agree with the label, estate, but any place in Westchester County New York with a five-bedroom stone house, a three bedroom guest house and a fifty foot swimming pool with cabana on twenty three acres of land ...that's an estate to me.

Bob started the lab after he found that conventional science at that time – medicine, psychology, psychiatry, and so on – couldn't give him any answers to his new problem ... going out of his physical body. He knew he had to do something, so he began to set up experiments and tests with the assistance of several curious friends, one a physicist, a psychologist, and the third, an electronics engineer. He was his own first subject, of course.

They built an isolation booth – probably the first prototype of the CHEC units you find in the Nancy Penn Center and Roberts Mountain Retreat. Their instrumental monitoring consisted of an old EKG unit, which they modified for audio signaling rather than charting, and a crude galvanic skin-response meter. They also built a copper screened cage, which they hung above ground and charged with high voltage ... with Bob in it ... just to see if it affected his ability to go out of body. (It did the first time, but not the second.)

Even that early, Bob started to use various sounds to bring about changes in consciousness. As a producer and director of hundreds of network radio programs and a composer of underscore mood music, it was very natural for him to move in this direction. He knew that certain musical combinations of sound would relax people, and others would do the opposite. He also was sure that the first step for any subject was to relax, and he didn't want the mind or consciousness blurred or distorted by sleeping pills.

So that was the beginning of sound induced Frequency Following Response, so to speak, where sound waves of a given frequency tend to help the human brain develop similar electrical waves. In 1975, Bob finally got around to applying for a patent on the process, which was granted in that year. In the testing of subjects in that early lab – Bob's friends, neighbors, and business associates – only the psychologist ever knew the reason for the experiments. His secret was safe because none of the other subjects had an out-of-body experience. But they did get a lot of sleep.

In the sixties, Bob moved to Richmond, Virginia, to be near his prime source of business then, radio stations in Virginia and North Carolina. The lab equipment came with him, and it wasn't long before he was set up again, with the aid of two Richmond medical doctors. One of the doctors had undergone a very profound out-of-body near-death experience, and the other was simply curious. As it always seems to happen, the curious doctor rapidly developed the out-of-body ability while the other observed, very frustrated to put it mildly.

In the middle sixties, Bob's business interests switched to cable television, and he moved to the Charlottesville area. On his farm west of town, he built his first major

laboratory, which was named Whistlefield Laboratories, after the farm. It was here, during the following ten years, that most of his basic research bore fruit. He soon gathered the usual core group of engineers, physicists, psychologists, and other interested parties – plus a group of volunteer subjects from all walks of life. The big difference was of course, that everybody knew what was going on. The only secrecy was that the public didn't know anything about it until the publication of Bob's book, *Journeys out of the Body*.

Work with hemispheric synchronization began almost immediately, and literally hundreds of hours were spent searching and determining which sound frequencies were most effective in specific ways. Out-of-body and other states of consciousness became standard operating procedure. Specialized instrumentation was designed and built as the need arose, and a very talented and trained group of subjects/participants steadily added data of an extra-ordinary nature.

With the advent of the Gateway Voyage program, an educational activity came into being, and the facility was renamed the Monroe Institute of Applied Sciences. With the purchase of the new land in Nelson County in 1979, the Institute moved to its present location. However, the Bob Monroe Research Laboratory was built two years later. And in 1985 the nonprofit organization known today as The Monroe Institute was formed.

So many things have happened along the way – like the time when Bob dove out of the early isolation booth because he was sure an earthquake was in progress, only to finally discover after weeks of investigation, that it was a freight train crossing a bridge five miles away ... or the time during a special experiment at Whistlefield, when all of the car batteries outside were drained of electricity ... or the energy brought in by a non-physical guest that blew all electronic circuits ... or the time a subject "disappeared" physically from a booth for two minutes ... or the device built that would swing a compass at 300 feet with a one and a half volt dry cell for power ... or explorations of the moon and Mars before Apollo and other space programs ... or the mystery of electrical polarity shift in our subjects and the observable concurrent change in consciousness ... and the null point, just before these shifts take place, which can be learned and returned to by human subjects, which seems a window to other reality states.